



Doug Sutherland
Commissioner of Public Lands

December 30, 2004

Dear Interested Party:

I am pleased to announce the availability of the Draft Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan (FPHCP) for the Forest Practices program and rules. The Washington Department of Natural Resources, on behalf of the State of Washington, has prepared this document as part of an ongoing process to provide protection of aquatic species while also providing a regulatory climate conducive to a viable forest products industry. Toward that end, the state is working to ensure that all forest practices activities in compliance with the state Forest Practices program and rules will satisfy federal requirements under the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act for aquatic species.

This habitat conservation plan covers nearly 9.1 million acres of state and private forestland and represents a unified and coordinated conservation effort among state, federal, tribal and local governments, environmental interests as well as small and large forestland owners. This successful partnership will help preserve healthy forests and clean streams for our wild salmon and other aquatic species, will help provide for a healthy forest products industry and will secure the sustainable and responsible management of our forests, now and for future generations.

We welcome your comments. Please submit them to the Federal Assurances Project, PO Box 47011, Olympia, WA 98504-7011 or by email to fphcpcomments@wadnr.gov within the 90-day public comment period.

Sincerely,

Doug Sutherland
Commissioner of Public Lands

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